

Massachusetts Water Resources Commission
Meeting Minutes for November 12, 1998

Commission Members in Attendance:

Mark P. Smith	Designee, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
Marilyn Contreas	Designee, Department of Housing and Community Development
Mike Gildesgame	Designee, Department of Environmental Management
Arleen O'Donnell	Designee, Department of Environmental Protection
Mark S. Tisa	Designee, Department of Fisheries, Wildlife & Environmental Law Enforcement
Joe Pelczarski	Designee, Office of Coastal Management
Gary Clayton	Public Member
Frank Veale	Public Member

Others in Attendance:

Steven Asen	DEM
R.W. Breault	Town Administrator, North Truro
Kara Buzanoski	Assistant Director DPW, Northborough
Frank Cooke	NepRWA
Nina Danforth	DEM
Lorraine M Downey	MWRA
Michele Drury	DEM/OWR
Mike Gildesgame	DEM/OWR
Duane LeVangie	DEP
William Pardee	Attorney General's Office
Sharon Pelosi	DEP
Cornelia Potter	MWRA, Advisory Board
Gretchen Roorbach	MWRA
Alan Slater	DEP

Agenda Item #1: Executive Director's Report:

- **The Executive Offices is in a transition period.** Trudy Coxie will be replaced by a new Secretary of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.
- **Meeting of interest:** 1) The MWRA I/I Conference, on December 2 will addressing key waste water issues, with very interesting speakers. 2) NepRWA will be conducting a meeting concerning water supply and management issues facing the Neponset River.
- **Watershed Initiative Update:** Twenty team leaders have been hired to head projects on Massachusetts' twenty-seven watersheds. The teams have developed work plans and picked the top five projects for each watershed. Commissioner Webber, as a member of the Round Table, met to find ways of funding these projects. The projects will aid in community involvement, and help to focus the attention of involved agencies. Projects given to DEM fall into two general categories: (1) river basin streamflow and hydrology studies and (2) lakes and pond studies.
- **A meeting has been requested with the USGS:** The USGS has been asked for information and assistance on site specific work by many agencies of EOE. The meeting will clarify what

work they are available for, because their main mission has been working on broader river basin or statewide projects rather than site specific projects. They are in the process of designing a program on the web that would provide real time information on streamflow, output, and duration curves of any given stream. They are currently working with us on a point and click system which will allow us to click on any point in a watershed and get streamflow and inflow information.

- **Update on current interbasin issues by Drury:** Mansfield, Staff has met with them to discuss pre-application procedures for a determination of insignificance. A notice of receipt of the application will be published in next month's Environmental Monitor. Foxborough and Mansfield, The two proposed projects are subjects under the interbasin transfer acts. Both are in one area near the Witch Pond in the Taunton River Basin. Both towns are sewered to Norton. Foxborough's application needs some additional work in defining hydrology of the area, which will be received soon. Stoughton is applying to develop a well for 0.59 mgd, but staff is concerned about the environmental impacts; therefore staff is recommending that a full application be submitted, rather than request for determination of insignificance. It is expected that Ashland, will be submitting application by the end of the year on two proposed wells. We may have an application from the town of Ashland in a joint project with Hopkinton. A decision on Hopkinton's request for determination of insignificance will be made once we have received requested additional information. Braintree and Weymouth MWRA interceptor project: we anticipate application by the end of the year. Canton has been working to meet conditions of interbasin transfer approval. They have been submitting a number of draft reports and all need additional information.
- **Draft Performance Standards:** The standards went out and we are expecting public comments before the period closes on the 8th of January. The WRC staff will be presenting the standards at the upcoming NEWWA meeting.

Agenda Item #2: Adoption of the Minutes of the Revised September, 1998 meeting

A motion was made by Clayton and seconded by Veale to:

ADOPTION OF THE REVISED SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES

motion passed unanimously

Agenda Item #3: Executive Session: For the purpose of litigation discussion

Bill Pardee came to update the Commission on the legal case facing the WRC due to the Canton decision.

A motion was made by Clayton and seconded by Thibedeau to:

ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS LITIGATION

motion was passed unanimously

Agenda Item #4: Vote Water needs forecast for Northborough

Asen presented the forecast based on the memo to staff from September, 1998. The date of the water need forecast will be changed from 2020 to 2011. This change is due to the need of a re-permit in 2011. Because of the 21% unaccountable water, the town is in the process of completing a leak detection survey. They have so far found very small leaks. Considering these findings the unaccountable water problem is most likely due to the outdated software. The new software will be in place by May 1999. O'Donnell requested that an update of unaccountable water be given to the Commission after the software was in place.

Smith inquired that once the wells are brought on-line how will this effect the use of MWRA water. The town replied it would lessen the use of MWRA water, but they are not sure exactly how much MWRA water they will be using in the future. Asen noted further that in the summer MWRA water would be used, but in the winter the town could fully supply its own needs.

Smith requested an update on the progress being made retrofitting buildings. The town has changed fixtures as part of Operation Water Sense in most public buildings except for schools.

Smith inquired if the well's basin is in stress and if an inflow/outflow balance has been done on the basin. Gildesgame responded that a full study has not been done. From superficial geological data there is an indication of stress. The impact of water withdrawal or waste water is unknown. To begin a new source approval or a Water Management Act approval, a permit must be granted first. The well's capacity is not fully known yet, but if stress is shown MWRA water can be used. O'Donnell requested that conditions be added that other sources be used when stress exists in the basin.

A motion was made by O'Donnell and seconded by Clayton:

TO APPROVE THE TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH'S WATER NEEDS FORECAST
AS PRESENTED.

The motion was passed unanimously

**Agenda Item #5: Vote Revisions to Public comment opportunities on Interbasin
Transfer Act staff recommendations**

Drury noted that more time for public comment had been put into the procedure. A public meeting will be held 7-14 days after the WRC meeting, at which the staff recommendations is presented to the Commission. The Commission will then have sixty days in which to make a decision. Because of the schedule of WRC meeting, an additional two months to the existing four month process, once the application is accepted as complete, this could result in. Thibedeau questioned if there would be enough time, after the public comments were made, for an agency discussion before the next WRC meeting. Drury noted there will be two weeks for agency discussion. She further noted the new process will add another WRC meeting for each decision.

Smith suggested the Commission should consider regulatory changes. MEPA now requires all significant basin transfers to complete an EIR. Substantial information will be added to applications

through the EIR processes. Smith suggested WRC hearings will become slightly less important. If this proves to be true the WRC meetings could become a part of the MEPA process.

A motion was made by O'Donnell and seconded by Clayton

TO APPROVE THE SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITIES ON
INTERBASIN TRANSFER ACT STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS, WITH REVISIONS.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #6: Presentation MWRA I/I meeting in December

The MWRA meeting will be focused on dealing with the south system and the Braintree and Weymouth areas affected by the waste water interceptor. O'Donnell noted that there are several issues that require the attention of the MWRA and the WRC: (1) The DEP is in negotiations with Braintree and Weymouth regarding the status of overflow in their sewers. The role the MWRA will take to help them deal with their I/I issues better should be determined. (2) The issues of outfall permit for the MWRA, and what will be put in the permit about I/I. In 1992 a MOA was signed on I/I. O'Donnell suggests re-looking at this document, revising it and researching other state with good I/I programs and find out why and how they work.. I/I standards should be looked at to decide what is acceptable. What the system is being designed for should also be considered. This will help to determine what is a reasonable amount of overflow and what is not.

Agenda Item #7: Presentation DEP Water Reuse Policy

Alan Slater presented the DEP water reuse policy and program based on the October, 1998 draft document on reclaimed water use. The final revised document should be adopted as policy by the end of the year. Goals of the policy are to reduce stress: provide added water sources: and promote innovative and alternative technologies.

Depending on type of reuse a high level treatment may be necessary and new technology can do this at a reduced cost. Waste water treatment plants need to have EPA class 1 reliability and redundancy. This includes alternative discharge sites, buffers and set back areas, emergency plans, and a good monitoring system. The commission inquired how often other states need to use their emergency plans. Slater was not sure of the exact number but assured it was low.

Smith inquired on what incentives exists to use waste water. Slater responded that companies with limited water use would see this as a resource to get their water needs fulfilled. This would also provide incentive for companies with a limited discharge area. If wastewater was treated to a higher level it would result in a smaller discharge area.

The Commission questioned that if wastewater was not put back into the river, that it qualifies as a withdrawal. Slater responded that it is a site specific question, and the DEP goal will be to recharge the area water is taken from. The most controversial issue is aquifer recharge. There is a concern about nutrients and pathogens entering the system. All water would be treated to DEP zone 2 standards, and the amount of nutrients and pathogens entering the system would be monitored. For example UV treatment, compounded with the two year travel period from discharge to recharge, would be adequate for removal of all viruses.

The Commission questioned if the DEP took into account season variability with the soil's ability to absorb nutrients. Slater responded they have not gotten to that detail yet. Pelosi noted that the companies who will implicate this process, golf courses and nurseries, are seasonal.

The WRC requested to see the final policy document.

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**SL**

Minutes approved 6/10/99